

Equal Opportunities Policy

This policy outlines ELH NM's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and equal treatment for staff, volunteers, directors, freelance contractors and beneficiaries of the charity in terms of employment and access to services; and to provide guidance on anti-discriminatory practice. This policy is non-contractual.

The policy applies specifically to discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or beliefs
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The policy applies across the range of employment policies and practice, including those relating to recruitment, discipline, grievance, harassment and complaints.

ELH NM values its staff, volunteers, directors and the local communities in which we work. ELH NM expects them to be treated in a respectful manner. Accordingly, all have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The Manager is responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality and diversity issues, and to ensure this policy document is kept up-to-date.

In both the organisation and our work in the neighbourhoods, ELH NM aims to:

- Promote equality of opportunity.
- Celebrate and value diversity.
- Advocate that the diversity of the area is an asset.
- Advocate a culture of tolerance and understanding between different communities from different backgrounds.
- Champion equality and anti-discrimination.

ELH NM will provide equality of opportunity and equal treatment as an integral part of good practice. The organisation is committed to a working environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully valued and recognised. ELH NM will support our staff, volunteers and directors in not tolerating any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from colleagues, other organisations or members of the community.

An inclusive neighbourhood – working in diverse communities

ELH NM recognises that it operates in a diverse area and its beneficiaries represent many different equalities groups. It also recognises that certain groups and individuals in society are oppressed and disadvantaged due to discrimination directed against them. ELH NM aims to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to the work of our organisation and the community in which they live. ELH NM aims to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity.

General purpose

ELH NM practices will ensure that no one will be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, race, sex, religion or beliefs, gender reassignment, marriage status and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. ELH NM's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to all kinds of discrimination, as set out below:

Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination – when a requirement or a condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.

Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination - direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.

Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.

Third party harassment – potential liability for the harassment of staff by others.

Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act or it is thought that they have done so.

ELH NM actively promotes equality and diversity. ELH NM recognises that diverse groups have a lot to offer and enrich and enhance both the organisation and the neighbourhood in which we operate. ELH NM will take positive steps to reduce inequality in the neighbourhood, increase fairness and ensure our organisational practices are supportive and anti-discriminatory. This includes:

- Employment practices.
- Recruitment of paid staff, volunteers and directors.
- Training and access to training.
- Data collection and storage (compliant with the Data Protection Act).

Legislation

ELH NM will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it and its staff do not unlawfully discriminate under the, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; Employment Rights Act 1996; Human Rights Act 1998; Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000; Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002; Civil Partnership Act 2004; Work and Families Act 2006; Equality Act 2010; Race Relations Act 1976; Disability Equality Duty; Gender Equality Duty; Racial Equality Code of Practice for Employment; Sex discrimination Act 1975; Equal Pay Act 1970; Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and any other relevant legislation in force from time to time relating to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods, facilities or services.

Equal opportunities policy implementation

ELH NM is committed to promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects of its work including management, employment practices with both paid workers and volunteers, access to services and service provision.

The directors shall ensure that it acts in such a way that no individual or group referred to in this policy is discriminated against, in particular:

- by making arrangements to accommodate the needs of the directors and volunteers including offering reasonable expenses;
- by providing information in a way that is accessible, within available resources (e.g. use of plain English, no jargon);
- by meeting in premises with facilities which are physically accessible to those participating;

- by making training in discrimination awareness and equal opportunities available to all directors, paid workers and volunteers.

The recruitment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by ensuring that posts are advertised in such a way as to encourage applications from groups experiencing discrimination;
- by preparing job descriptions which clearly set out what the worker is to do, and person specifications which recognise that relevant experience can be as valuable as qualifications or previous paid employment;
- by ensuring that in all selection procedures only factors relevant to the requirements of the post are taken into account, and that the spirit of the policy statement is adhered to;
- a copy of this policy is to be sent to prospective applicants for all posts.

The employment of paid workers and volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by providing training relevant to the needs of staff and designed to enable them to carry out their jobs;
- by ensuring that any staff member who, in the course of their work, displays attitudes contrary to this policy to any person whether by word, behaviour or other manner shall be liable to disciplinary action;
- by recognising and responding to the individual needs of staff, especially those who are carers or who have disabilities, and ensuring that, within available resources, the necessary support is provided to enable them to work effectively.

In every aspect of the planning, management, access, provision and monitoring of our work, the directors and staff shall seek to promote equality of opportunity in accordance with this policy, in particular:

- by seeking to identify and respond to the needs of those groups experiencing discrimination, altering priorities and methods of service delivery where necessary;
- by seeking feedback, evaluating and monitoring our work;
- by outreach and consultation with relevant groups.